



Newborn Behaviors

Behaviors that may concern parents but are neither abnormal nor indicate illness

Normal Behaviors That May Be Seen in Your Baby Include:

- Quivering of chin or lower lip when preparing to cry.
- Hiccup – Small harmless spasms of the diaphragm muscle.
- Sneezing – Helps the baby clean his or her nose of mucus, dust and lint.
- Wet burps after feeding – Small amount of milk that comes up with a burp.
- Straining/red face with bowel movements.
- Startle reflex – A response to noise or movement; the arms and legs extend outward and move back to the center, after which baby may cry.
- Trembling/jitteriness of arms and legs, usually while crying.
- Yawning.
- Crossed-eyes – This is due to immature muscles and will improve as muscle strength improves.
- Passing gas.
- Occasional cough.
- Occasional irregular breathing – May occur in a comfortable-looking baby who does not appear to be in distress.

Waking/Sleeping Behavior:

- Your baby may sleep 15 to 20 hours per day in the first month.
- After 1 month of age, sleep periods may become longer at night and shorter during the day.
- Established patterns may be interrupted during growth spurts, illness and teething.

Development:

- Your baby can see objects six to eight inches from his or her eyes.
- Studies show babies prefer designs in black and white.
- Babies can hear and locate the general direction of sounds.
- Your baby will be able to have head control by the end of the third month.
- Smiling begins by 3 to 5 weeks of age.
- Cooing and babbling begins at about 2 to 3 months of age.
- Your baby enjoys being talked to and will respond with movement of his or her arms and legs.

Adapted from: Patti J. Thureen, MD; Jane Deacon, RNC, MS, NNP; Patricia O'Neill, RN, MS; and Jacinto A. Hernandez, MD, MHA, Assessment and Care of the Well Newborn, W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1999.

